

18 October 2002

DAVIES COLLISON CAVE
1 Little Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Your Ref : 2458326/KL/jmf

Examiner's first report on patent application no. 72184/01
by NIPPON KANZAI CO., LTD.

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am replying to the request for normal examination. I have examined the application and I believe that there are lawful grounds of objection to the application. These grounds of objection are:

1. The specification does not comply with Section 40(4). The claims do not relate to a single invention or inventive concept only. I have found the following inventions:
 - Claims 1-3, 8-10 and 15-17, directed to the forecasting of repair costs for a building. I consider the calculation of repair costs based on a deterioration parameter to be a first special technical feature.
 - Claims 4, 6, 11, 13, 18 and 20, directed to the forecasting of management costs for a building. I consider the calculation of management costs based on a deterioration parameter to be a second special technical feature.
 - Claims 5, 7, 12, 14, 19 and 21 directed to the calculation of a fuel and light bill for a building. I consider the calculation of variable expenses based on fuel and lighting expense data to be a third special technical feature.

Since these groups of claims do not share any common special technical feature, a technical relationship between the claims does not exist. Accordingly, the claims lack unity, *à priori*.

I have limited my search and report to the first invention, defined by claims 1-3, 8-10 and 15-17. When I receive a response to my objections, I may expand the search and report on the basis of my findings.

2. Claims 1, 8 and 15 are not novel in light of the following documents:
 - Derwent Accession Number 99-050783/05, JP 10301987 A (SHOHEI FUDOSAN KK), 13th November 1998
 - GB 2 197 513 A (STATE OF VICTORIA), 18th May 1988

Each of these documents discloses all the essential features of the claimed invention. (In the second citation, refer in particular to page 2, column 1, lines 19-31, and page 3, column 1, line 45 - column 2, line 83.)

3. Furthermore, claims 2, 3, 9, 10, 16 and 17 lack inventive step in light of each of the above citations. These claims merely add features which are common in the art, and do not confer inventive step to the claimed invention.

NOTE: There is a current postponement of acceptance in place. If you overcome all other objections before the expiration of that postponement, the Commissioner will only accept the application at that time if you have filed a clear and unambiguous statement requesting the withdrawal of that postponement. Otherwise, a further adverse report will be issued.

You have 21 months from the date of this report to overcome all my objections, otherwise your application will lapse. You will need to pay a monthly fee for any response you file after 12 months from the date of this report.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Hollingworth".

MATTHEW HOLLINGWORTH
Examiner of Patents, Section C4
Telephone: (02) 6283 2024